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ACTION NEA-16

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E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJECT: JOINT WORKING GROUPS -- MEDICAL COOPERATION

REF: CAIRO 4703

1. SUBMITTED HERewith ARE OUR COMMENTS ON THE ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONS OF THE JOINT WORKING GROUP (JWG) ON MEDICAL COOPERATION.

2. BACKGROUND:

A. EGYPT HAS A RELATIVELY WELL ORGANIZED MINISTRY OF HEALTH AWITH A DYNAMIC, IMAGINATIVE MINISTER (MAHFOUZ). ITS MEDICAL PROBLEMS ARE, OF COURSE, ENORMOUS. THE GREAT NEED IS NOT SO MUCH IN THE AREA OF MEDICAL RESEARCH BUT IN APPLIED PREVENTATIVE MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH ACTIVITY. OVER POPULATION, POOR SANITATION CONDITIONS, HEAVY DEPENDENCE ON THS NILE,ET., COMBINE TO MAKE EGYPT'S PEOPLE DISEASE RIDDEN. BILHARZIA, TUBERCULOSIS, TRACHOMA, VENERAL DISEASE, MEASLES, HEPATITIS ARE ALL WIDESPREAD IN THE COUNTRY. THOUGH EGYPT HAS SEVERAL MEDICAL SCHOOLS, ITS POST-GRADUATE MEDICAL FACILITIES ARE VIRTUALLY LACKING. MOREOVER, BECAUSE OF HARD CURRENCY SHORTAGES, EGYPT'S HOSPITAL EQUIPMENT IS IN A POOR STATE. IT CONSISTS OF

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A WIDE VARIETY OF MAKES FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES, MAKING REPLACEMENT

OF PARTS AND MAINTENANCE DIFFICULT. FINALLY, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT MADAME SADAT IS SPONSORING THE FAITH AND HOPE SOCIETY (WAFAL-AMIL) WHOSE PURPOSE IS TO PROVIDE TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION FACILITIES FOR PARAPLEGICS AND/OR AMPUTEES. THIS ORGANIZATION IS STILL IN ITS EMBRYONIC STAGE AND USG HAS CONTRIBUTED \$10 MILLION WORTH OF EGYPTIAN POUNDS TO IT. IT HAS ITS OWN DIRECTOR AND BOARD, BUT MINISTER OF HEALTH HAS RECENTLY BEEN ADDED TO THE BOARD. FOR THE PAST 25 YEARS NAMRU-3 HAS ALSO PARTICIPATED IN DOING RESEARCH ON INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

3. ORGANIZATION:

A. MEMBERSHIP AND VENUE: JWG SHOULD NORMALLY MEET IN CAIRO. ON EGYPTIAN SIDE, MINISTER OF HEALTH AND HIS SUBORDINATES ARE LIKELY TO BE PRINCIPAL PARTICIPANTS. WE EXPECT THAT GENERAL DOCTOR SNEY, THE DIRECTOR

OF THE FAITH AND HOPE SOCIETY WILL ALSO PARTICIPATE ON MADAME SADAT'S INSISTENCE. THERE WILL PROBABLY BE SOME COMPETING CLAIMS BETWEEN THE TWO. ON AMERICAN SIDE, AMBASSADOR AND/OR DCM, CHIEF OF NAMRU AND SUCH TDY PERSONNEL AS MAY BE NEEDED. EMBASSY NURSE AND REGIONAL MEDICAL OFFICER SHOULD ALSO BE ABLE TO ASSIST AS NEEDED.

B. FUNCTIONS:

(1) EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING POST-GRADUATE MEDICAL SCHOOL AT NASR DIABETES INSTITUTE.; MAHFOUZ HAS EVINCED AN INTEREST IN SUCH A JOINT US-EGYPTIAN INSTITUTION.

(2) EXPLORE WAYS AND MEANS OF IMPROVING EGYPTIAN MEDICAL TREATMENT, TRAINING AND RESEARCH FACILITIES.

(3) EXPLORE PROSPECTS OF ASSISTING FAITH AND HOPE SOCIETY TO ACCELERATE ITS HOSPITAL PLANNING.

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PERHAPS PRIVATE FOUNDATIONR MIGHT HELP IN THIS REGARD.

(4) EXPLORE HOW NURSING PROGRAM THROUGHOUT EGYPT MAY BE UPGRADED.

(5) ENCOURAGE SHORT TERM VISITS OF AMERICAN MEDICAL SPECIALISTS FOR LECTURE AND WORKSHOP PURPOSES.

(6) CONSIDER HOW NAMRU MAY BE ABLE
TO
BROADEN ITS ACTIVITIES TO ASSIST GOE MINISTRY OF
HEALTH.

(7) ENCOURAGE GOE PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION
TO FOCUS ON CERTAIN SELECT AREAS OF PRIORITY IMPORTANCE
SUCH AS EYE DISEASES, TB, ETC.

(8) CONSIDER HOW TO STRENGTHEN EGYPT'S
POPULATION CONTROL PROGRAM.

(9) EXPLORE AND DEVELOP POSSIBILITIES FOR
ESTABLISHMENT OF CARE/MEDICO PROGRAMS (OPHTHALMIC,
ORTHOPEDIC) AND/OR VISIT BY SS HOPE-TYPE VISSELS.

(10) IN CORRINATION WITH JWG ON INVESTMENTS,
ESTABLISH PRIORITIES FOR MEDICAL-RELATED INVESTMENT
PROJECTS (HOSPITAL SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT) AND
ENCOURAGE AND FACILITATE US PRIVATE PARTICIPATION.

(1) EXAMINE MEANS FOR TRAINING, IN THE
US, SENIOR TECHNICIANS AND SPECIALIST/NURSES IN THE
USE OF SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT AND ENCOURAGE EMPLOYMENT
OF THAT EQUIPMENT IN EGYPT SO AS TO ACHIEVE MAXIMUM
EFFECTIVENESS.

4. SINCE FAHMY WANTS JWG'S ORGANIZED AT AUGUST
JOINT COMMISSION ON COOPERATION (JCC) SESSION, GROUP
SHOULD ENDEAVOR TO HAVE SOME TANGIBLE RESULTS
ANNOUNCED DURING PRESIDENT SADAT'S TRIP TO THE
UNITED STATES. UPCOMING VISIT OF SECRETARY SIMON
SHOULD OFFER FURTHER OPPORTUNITY PROBE PERTINENT
EGYPTIAN THINKING.

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5. AT JULY 4 RECEPTION, MINISTER OF HEALTH MAHFOUZ
SAID HE WISHES BEGIN "DIALOGUE" WITH AMBASSADOR IN
PREPARATION FOR JWG SESSIONS.
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